

Morning Light by L. Borealis

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Summary: Just a fluffy little drabble highlighting the first few minutes of the morning after El closed the gate.

Morning Light

The cloth was warm and wet against her face as it brought her to consciousness. It was a comforting feeling, light warm wet dabs against her upper lip from a soft hand. The feeling was quickly eclipsed by the awareness of a raging headache. She could detect sunlight through her eyelids. She pressed her eyelids tightly shut to try to block it out. She had no idea where she was, but she sensed that she was nowhere near the gate.

The gate... her body felt stiff yet limp. Heavy and unyielding. It had taken everything she'd had. She shuddered and moaned lightly.

"El?!" She heard a voice whisper, "El, are you awake?"

El's eyes shot open in surprise as she heard his voice.

"Mike..." she rasped. Mike loomed over her, in his hand a bloody rag. He looked like he hadn't slept all night. His hair was a piled mess and his face was covered in dirt. He was the absolute best thing she had ever seen. He bit his lip and shook his hair out of his eyes as he looked down on her from the chair he had pulled up next to the bed.

Out of the corner of her eye she discerned that she was in Will's room, lying in the exact place where she had seen him the night before. When he was still possessed... before she had shut the gate...

"Will?" she questioned quietly.

"He's good! They got it out of him. He's sleeping in his mom's bed..." Mike opened his mouth to continue, but no words came out. Frankly, she couldn't think of anything to say, either. All this time apart, and none of the five thousand things she wanted to say to him came to mind. They sat in thick silence.

"I'm happy you're home," he said quietly, a tentative smile etching across his lips. Home. A rush of euphoria shot through her body at the word. Her headache quickly forgotten, she shot up from the bed at lightning speed and pulled him into an embrace. He grunted in surprise but quickly recovered as his arms wrapped around her

tightly.

"Mike..." she breathed against his ear. Tears stung her eyes as she held him. Real. He was real. She could feel him breathing. She could smell his hair. He wasn't fading away.

"I knew you were out there. I just knew it," he murmured in her ear.

"I heard you," she replied, tears stinging her own eyes, "I said your name so you'd know I was there."

Mike pulled back suddenly, his eyes wide. "I...heard you!" he replied. "I thought I was going crazy!"

"Not crazy," she said with a smile as she shook her head.

"Not crazy," he repeated with a laugh. The sound exploded her heart. Mike leaned back and reached down by his feet. He came back up with a wet wash cloth, "Here, let me..." Mike leaned in and returned to lightly dabbing the space above her lip to remove the blood.

"I've never seen you bleed this much. Was closing the gate really hard?" he asked as he focused on tending to her face.

"Yes. It was hard. I floated," she replied matter of factly, "Never happened before. It was hard."

"Whoa. Like levitated?" Mike asked, eyes wide with astonishment.

"What's Levi...tated?" El questioned.

"Oh!" Mike said as he placed his hand on her chin to tilt her head to the side in order to clean beside her ear, "It's like when you float in place. You don't fly or go up or down or anything, you just float in one spot. Is that what you did?"

El nodded, "Yes. That. Levitated. I levitated."

"Woah, El... That's... wow..." Mike sputtered as he turned her head to the other side, "You can levitate..."

"I guess so," she shrugged.

Mike laughed as he gave the side of her face a few final wipes, "There you go. All clean, El."

"Jane," she replied.

"What?" Mike asked in surprise.

"Jane," she repeated as she pointed at herself.

"Oh... that's your real name? Jane?" he asked. She nodded. Mike regarded her in silence for a second as he studied her face, "Jane. That's really pretty."

Her face broke into a timid smile as his words bloomed within her chest like a rose. She sat in silence as she studied his face, her heart picking up speed. Mike was here, right beside her. In this dimension. In this room. In her reach.

She sat up straighter, her hands shaking. Her heartbeat suddenly racing. "Mike..." she stated firmly.

"Yeah, Jane?" he asked.

The words caught in her throat. Or maybe she didn't know what the words were. Their eyes locked in the silence of the room. Without any forethought, she leaned in and caught his lips with hers. Her hands reached up to cup his face, like she had seen in so many romance movies. Like she had achingly dreamed of doing to Mike for months. Mike exclaimed in surprise against her lips. Jane leaned back quickly. Mike breathed deeply, his eyes wide in shock. She pulled her hands away slowly.

"Wow," Mike breathed awkwardly. Mike's face began to flush.

"Hot," she said, touching his face again.

"Oh, uh, It's nothing...I just," Mike could not string together words, "You surprised me is all."

"What that...okay?" she asked, suddenly unsure of herself.

"Yeah!" he exclaimed a little too loudly. A little too eagerly. And with

that, footsteps were heard in the hallway.

"Kid, is she awake?" Hopper's voice echoed down the hall. Mike's face turned a deeper shade of red and cursed under this breath.

"I'm awake," Jane called weakly.

Hopper burst through the door, "Didn't I tell you to come get me the *second* she wakes up? No pussy footing around?"

"I just woke up," Jane replied calmly, cutting in to cover for Mike.

"Yeah, she just woke up a second ago, Chief, promise. I was just going to come and let you know," he said in a jumble, his face still visibly flushed.

Hopper eyed the boy suspiciously, "Okay..." he said, "Mike, go get El some breakfast. There's a bunch of Eggos and bacon in the kitchen."

Mike clambered up quickly and exited the room. Hopper wasted no time in taking Mike's seat.

"Jane," she said.

Hopper's breath slowed as he took in what she said. "Okay... You want to go by your name now?" Jane nodded. Hopper was quiet for a moment in contemplation, "Alright then... So.. *Jane*... How are you feeling?"

"Tired. Headache," she replied, point to her temple.

Hopper nodded. "Yeah, that makes sense. Wait right here. I'll go find something for that," he said as he stood back up before turning around quickly. His harsh demeanor softened as he smiled gratefully, "You did a hell of a job last night, kid. Did you know you could fly?"

"Levitate," she corrected.

Hopper sighed, "I knew that little rat was lying. That has definitely not been a word of the day yet."

Jane just shrugged lazily and leaned back into the bed as Hopper

exited and shut the door. The excitement of the morning only did so much to push her past her exhaustion. Now that she was alone her eyes began to droop. As her eyelids shut the sensation of Mike's lips against hers returned and a calm and elated wave washed over her. She touched him. When her fingers brushed against his cheek he was actually there, not just a vision. 353 days. It had been worth the wait.